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ABSTRACT

Provided are sample lesson plans for a program to develop pre-language skills in profoundly retarded children and adults. Characteristic of the suggested activities is the stimulation of all sensory channels through structured infant-like play activities in five general areas: oral stimulation, sensory arousal, motor stimulation, vocal play, and vocal imitation. (DB)

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PRE-LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES FOR THE PROFOUNDLY MENTALLY RETARDED

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EC 110 389

PRE-LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES (PLA) FOR THE

PROFOUNDLY MENTALLY RETARDED

INTRODUCTION

In 1975 Arkansas Children's Colony speech clinicians and the curriculum developer for the profoundly retarded area of the education department recognized the need for a structured pre-language stimulation program for approximately 200 profoundly retarded individuals. A program was designed for implementation by paraprofessional education personnel with speech clinicians serving as consultants and program evalutors.

Pre-language Activities (PLA) include tasks which are presented sequentially to provide daily experiences in five general areas: oral stimulation, sensory arousal, motor stimulation, vocal play, and vocal imitation.

An innovative aspect of the pre-language activities (PLA) program is the stimulation of all sensory channels through structured infant-like play activities aimed at evoking awareness of environmental stimuli no matter how passive or seemingly unaware the profoundly retarded individual. Training is accomplished in groups of four individuals per class.

Five behavioral objectives are included in each daily training lesson. Training procedures and materials are specified. Limited trainer supervision is needed because of the explicit daily lesson plans.

In three years of use, with modifications made as necessary, the program has proven to be an effective method for training profoundly retarded and severely physically handicapped individuals ranging in age from three years to adulthood, who have a language age equivalent of less than one year as determined by Mecham's Verbal Language Development Scale. Primary focus of the program has been with adult profoundly mentally retarded individuals who for the most part have no self-help skills and exhibit bizarre behaviors. These are individuals who have residual

infant-like behavior, who enjoy and respond to the play atmosphere of tickling, echoing, and babbling. A goal for training is to maintain a play atmosphere while presenting developmental tasks in a structured format.

During the 1976-77 school year, out of 67 residents trained the following percentages made progress:

40% made percentage gains on oral stimulation tasks
43% made gains on sensory-arousal
17% made gains in motor stimulation
28% made gains in vocal play
6% made gains in vocal imitation

Recognizing the need for accountability in training procedures, pre- and post-tests, daily record sheets, and summary profiles (Saunders and Koplik, Kansas Neurological Institute, 1974) were incorporated into the program design. Teacher motivation has been promoted through task variety, while student motivation has been accomplished through the play atmosphere created. Behavioral techniques employing edible reinforcers are used in the training format.

GENERAL AREAS OF TRAINING

Oral stimulation tasks are designed to increase tonus of lip, tongue and jaw masculature. The tasks facilitate lip puckering, tongue elevation, sucking and tongue protrusion and stimulate awareness of the oral musculature.

Sensory arousal tasks are designed to stimulate the child to an awareness that he is a part of an active environment in which he can respond. Responses can be positive or negative because in either case the child has demonstrated an awareness of impinging stimuli.

Motor stimulation tasks are designed to facilitate active movement by the child. The movements can be elicited or spontaneous imitations.

Vocal play tasks are designed to evoke any vocalization from the child in a play construct.

Vocal imitation tasks are designed to elicit sound imitation in a specific structured training situation.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS

A daily training session includes one task from each of the five general areas. A specified five-day-training sequence is described in the section "Daily Lessons". Different tasks are presented in each general area each day for five days, and then the sequence is repeated each week until the child reaches at least 60% correct responses for each general area.

If a child reaches a criteria of 60% correct for vocal imitation, it is recommended he be trained on an alternate program such as the Guess, Sailor and Baer Functional Language Program.

TRAINING INSTRUCTIONS

1. As stated above, one daily lesson plan includes one training task for each general area: (a) oral stimulation; (b) sensory arousal; (c) motor stimulation; (d) vocal play; and (e) vocal imitation.
2. Children may be trained individually or in groups up to four per group. Each child in a group is trained on each task in a lesson each day.
3. Each child is given five trials on each task in the lesson each day. The trials may be given consecutively to each child, or alternately among the children in the group.
4. Each task is presented in the order it is written in the daily lesson
5. Self-graphing check sheets are provided to indicate types of responses each child makes on each trial, and summary sheets[1] are provided to profile progress.
6. Scoring code:

○	(a circle around a number) correct response (reinforced)
A	approximation (reinforced)
P	prompted response (reinforced)
/	in correct response
NR	no response

(1) The monthly summary sheet was designed by Teresa Pool, Teacher, Arkansas Children's Colony.

DAILY LESSONS
Day 1

1. Oral stimulation

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will protrude his tongue to lick a sucker or candy.

   b. Method: Using a sucker, stroke the child's tongue from front to back. Move the sucker froward to ½ inch from child's lips. Say: "Lick the sucker." Use prompts if needed.

   c. Materials: Sucker or candy.

2. Sensory arousal

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will indicate an awareness of his environment by a startle reaction, a laugh, a vocalization, a cry, a pushing or pulling away reaction, or a movement of his fingers in spontaneous imitation, in response to a finger play game.

   b. Method: Using the index and second fingers as "legs" walk hand toward the child along a table, or along child's arm or leg, saying: "Here comes a bug. Here comes a bug. He's 'gonna' get you." Run fingers up and tickle child. Reinforce and score as a correct response any reaction from the child that indicates his awareness of the activity.

3. Motor stimulation

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will grasp a scarf in one hand and pull it through an open fist on his other hand.

   b. Method: Demonstrate the task for the child by grasping a scarf with both hands and pulling the right hand away from the left hand drawing the full length of the scarf through the fist. As you model say: "Do this, pull, pull." Place the scarf in the child's hands. Use physical prompts to guide the child through the task. As the scarf is pulled through the fist give multiple verbal stimulation saying: "Pull, pull". Fade prompts until the child performs independently.

4. Vocal play

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will make a vocal response to auditory-visual stimuli.

   b. Method: Say: "(child's name), do this", as you wave your hand and say , "bye-bye." If the child makes a vocal response score a correct response. If the child makes no vocalization, manipulate his lips to shape the movement for "bye-bye" and score a prompt. Make a note if child waves but does not vocalize.

5. Vocal imitation

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will produce the vocalization "ah", by imitation of a model.

   b. Method: Say, "(child's name), do this: Ah." If the child produces the modeled sound, or approximates it, reinforce him and score accordingly.

1. Oral stimulation

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will lift his tongue to the alveolar ridge.

   b. Method: Place a tiny bit of peanut butter behind the child's upper front teeth. Say: "(child's name), eat, eat." If the child is able to lift his tongue to get the peanut butter, reinforce him and score a correct response. If he does not attempt to get the food, use a tongue depressor to raise his tongue to touch the food.

2. Sensory arousal

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will indicate awareness of olfactory stimulation by moving toward or away from the source of a scent.

   b. Method: Hold a small bottle of scent close to the child's nose for three seconds. Say: "Smell that." Present the scents alternately for the five trials. Score positive or negative reaction as a correct response.

3. Motor stimulation

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will roll a ball.

   b. Method: Roll a ball to the child as you say: "(child's name), do this." If the child does not respond, use physical prompts to help him roll the ball. Gradually fade the prompts. (A physically handicapped child may use an elbow, or other body part to push the ball.) Score a correct response if the child moves the ball at all without help.

4. Vocal play

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will produce a vocalization, (laugh, "uh-oh", or any vocalization) in response to auditory-visual stimulation.

   b. Method: Hold a heavy toy in front of a child so the child sees it. Drop the toy and in a loud voice with much inflection, say: "Uh-oh!,

Uh-oh!" Place the toy in the child's hand, cause him to drop it and say: "Uh-oh!" Score any vocalization a correct response.

c. Materials: Heavy toy that will make a noise when it is dropped.

5. Vocal imitation

a. Behavioral objective: The child will produce the vocalization "uh" by imitation of a model.

b. Method: Say: "(child's name), do this: Uh." If the child produces the modeled sound, or approximates it, reinforce him and score accordingly.

1. Oral stimulation

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will purse his lips around a straw.

   b. Method: Place a small amount of peanut butter on the end of a straw and place the straw between the child's lips. As you hold the straw in the child's mouth say: "(child's name), do this." Trainer smacks his lips and says" "Yum, yum." Score a correct response if the child brings his lips together around the straw. If the child does not respond, use physical prompts to move his lips in a pursing movement.

   c. Materials: Straw, peanut butter.

2. Sensory arousal

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will indicate an awareness of a loud noise by a startle response, an eye blink, by turning toward the source of the sound or other reactions.

   b. Method: Making sure the sound source is out of the child's field of vision, present a loud noise to the child. Alternate sides with each presentation. Use a different noise maker each day. If the child shows any positive or negative reaction to the sound, score a correct response.

   c. Materials: Halloween noise makers, bells, blocks in a can, etc.

3. Motor stimulation

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will ring a bell.

   b. Method: Say: "(child's name), do this." as you ring a bell. Place the bell in the child's hand. Score a correct response for any attempt to ring the bell. If the child makes no response, use physical prompts.

   c. Materials: A large bell with a handle.

4. Vocal play

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will make a vocal response to auditory-visual stimuli.

b. Method: Hold a scarf in front of thechild blocking his view of the trainer, or place the scarf over the child's head as you say: "Where is (child's name)?" Quickly pull the scarf away as you say: "There he is!" Use exaggerated vocal inflections. Score any vocalization from the child as a correct response. Make a note if child seems to be trying to imitate the trainer's words.

c. Materials: A silk scarf.

6. Vocal imitation

a. Behavioral objective: The child will produce the vocalization "puh". by imitation of a model.

b. Method: Say: "(child's name), do this: Puh." Score a correct response for correct production; score 'A' for approximation.

1. Oral stimulation

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will suck through a straw.

   b. Method: Present a small cup of liquid with a short straw to the child. Say: "Drink the pop." If the child sucks the straw, score a correct response. If the child fails to respond facilitate the sucking response, by placing liquid on the end of the straw and placing it in the child's mouth. A shorter straw, or one with a larger diameter may be needed.

2. Sensory arousal

   a. Behavioral objective: The child indicates awareness of being tickled by pushing away, pulling toward trainer, laughing, trying to tickle trainer, or by vocalization.

   b. Method: Intrude on the child's body space by tickling him as you say: "Gitchee, gitchee, gitchee." Any positive or negative reaction to the stimuli is reinforced and scored as a correct response.

3. Motor stimulation

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will place a hat on his head by imitation of a model.

   b. Method: Place a hat on your head as you say: "(child's name), do this." Give the hat to the child. If he responds correctly, score a correct response. If the child does not respond, use physical prompts to train the response.

4. Vocal play

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will produce vocalization in response to auditory-visual stimuli.

   b. Method: Push a small toy car, truck or move a toy airplane in the air as you vocalize the sound of a motor, such as "vrroom, vrroom."

Help the child push or fly the toy, you vocalize the sound. Score a correct response for any vocalization from the child.

5. Vocal imitation

a. Behavioral objective: The child will produce the vocalization "ee" by imitation of a model.

b. Method: Say: "(child's name), do this: ee." If the child produces the sound reinforce and score accordingly. Prompts may be needed.

1. Oral stimulation

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will blow bubbles using a bubble wand.

   b. Method: Using a commercial bubble blowing mixture, hold the bubble wand close to your lips, say: "(child's name), do this." Blow bubbles from the wand, and then hold the wand near the child's lips and encourage him to blow. Use physical prompts if necessary.

   c. Materials: Commercial bubble liquid, available at variety stores.

2. Sensory arousal

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will indicate awareness of visual-tactile-auditory stimulation by laughing, pulling away, or vocalizing.

   b. Method: Starting with the thumb wiggle the child's fingers one at a time as you say the following finger play:

   "This little piggy went to market,
   This little piggy stayed home,
   This little piggy had roast beef,
   This little piggy had none,
   This little piggy said, 'wee, wee, wee, all the way home'."

   c. Materials: Any finger play can be used.

3. Motor imitation

   a. Behavioral objective: The child will push a button on a buzzer board to produce a noise.

   b. Method: Say: "(child's name), do this." as you depress a button on a buzzer board. Use physical prompts if needed. If child touches the button, but does not depress it to actuate the buzzer, score an approximation. The board may be modified for the physically handicapped child.

   c. Materials: Buzzer board available from:

   Developmental Learning Materials $8.75
   7440 Natchez Avenue
   Niles, Illinois 60648

4. Vocal play

a. Behavioral objective: The child will produce the animal sound "moo" in response to auditory-visual stimuli.

b. Method: Show the child a Mollie Moo Cow toy, or some other animal toy. Say: "What does the cow say? (pause) Moo! You do it. Moo." Give the child time to respond. As you say "moo", activate the toy so that it produces the desired sound. The child can be allowed to squeeze the actuator on the toy to create the sound. Any vocalization is scored correctly.

c. Materials: Mollie Moo Cow, available from Fisher-Price vendors. Other toys or pictures can be used.

5. Vocal imitation

a. Behavioral objective: The child will produce the vocalization "mama" by imitation of a model.

b. Method: Say: "(child's name), do this: 'Mama'." If the child responds correctly within three seconds, score a correct response.

TRAINER: _____ NAME: _____

PRE-LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

Tongue Out	Finger Walk	Pull Scarf	Wave "Bye"	"Ah"	Tongue Up	Smell	Roll Ball	"Uh-oh"	"Uh"	Lip-Straw	Noise	Ring Bell	"Where's Tom?"	"Push"	Suck-Straw	Tickle	Hat On	Car Motor	"Ee"	Bubbles	Little Piggy	Buzzer	"Moo"	"Mama"	% Correct
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	100
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	80
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	60
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	40
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

DATE:

Tongue Out	Finger Walk	Pull Scarf	Wave "Bye"	"Ah"	Tongue Up	Smell	Roll Ball	"Uh-oh"	"Uh"	Lip-Straw	Noise	Ring Bell	"Where's Tom?"	"Push"	Suck Straw	Tickle	Hat On	Car Motor	"Ee"	Bubbles	Little Piggy	Buzzer	"Moo"	"Mama"	
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	100
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	80
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	60
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	40
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

DATE:

Tongue Out	Finger Walk	Pull Scarf	Wave "Bye"	"Ah"	Tongue Up	Smell	Roll Ball	"Uh-oh"	"Uh"	Lip-Straw	Noise	Ring Bell	"Where's Tom?"	"Push"	Suck-Straw	Tickle	Hat On	Car Motor	"Ee"	Bubbles	Little Piggy	Buzzer	"Moo"	"Mama"	
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	100
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	80
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	60
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	40
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

DATE:

CODE: ○ - Correct Response
A - Approximation
P - Prompted Response
/ - Incorrect Response
NR - No Response

COMMENTS:

Monthly Language Survey for 1977-78 Training

RESIDENT: _____ UNIT TEAM DATE: _____

_____ ADMISSION DATE: _____

BIRTHDATE: _____ INSTRUCTOR: _____

PART I

MONTH	ORAL	SENSORY	MOTOR	VOCAL PLAY	VOCAL IMITATION	STUDENT ABSENT	CLASS CANCELLED
SEPT							
OCT							
NOV							
DEC							
JAN							
FEB							
MAR							
APRIL							
MAY							
JUNE							
JULY							
AUG							

PROGRESS REPORT FOLLOWING 1977-78 TRAINING

ARKANSAS CHILDREN'S COLONY
Language Abilities Survey

NAME:
BD:
AGE:

DATE:
UNIT TEAM DATE:

PROGRESS SUMMARY

ACTIVITY	% Correct First Training Month	% Correct Last Training Month	% Difference + Progressi - Regressio
Part I - Pre-Language Tasks			
1. Oral Stimulation			
2. Sensory Arousal			
3. Motor Stimulation			
4. Vocal Play			
5. Vocal Imitation			

COMMENTS:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

PROGRAM PLACEMENT:

TRAINER